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Rep. Sargent Introduces Bill to Fully Legalize Marijuana

"The most dangerous thing about marijuana is that it is illegal"

(MADISON) Today, Representative Melissa Sargent (D-Madison) introduced LRB-0188, which would legalize marijuana for recreational and medicinal purposes in Wisconsin.

"Marijuana prohibition has not worked for Wisconsin. Ending this prohibition in our state would promote personal freedom and liberty, create financial opportunity, and increase safety and security in our communities. We have spent countless taxpayer dollars, imprisoned non-violent offenders, perpetuated falsehoods, and created a dangerous black market. This must end," Rep. Sargent stated.

According to the most recent statistics, Wisconsin has the worst racial disparities in the nation. African-Americans are four times more likely to be arrested for marijuana possession than Caucasians despite nearly identical usage rates. In Madison, the ratio is a staggering twelve to one.

"As Wisconsin deals with devastating financial shortfalls created by Governor Walker, we must look at all available options to bring in revenue," Rep. Sargent continued.

"I know that legalizing marijuana would begin to address these pressing issues facing our state. For too long our policies have worsened our jail to prison pipeline which has destroyed lives, torn families apart, and harmed children by depriving them of parental involvement. It is a travesty that we are putting millions of taxpayer dollars and resources into victimless crimes when we should be doing the exact opposite: creating revenue and letting our police officers focus on keeping peace in our neighborhoods."

"The facts clearly show that legalization is right for Wisconsin and that the most dangerous thing about marijuana is that it's illegal. I look forward to providing a home-grown marijuana solution for Wisconsin that will honor the personal freedoms of our hard working citizens," Rep. Sargent concluded.

Rep. Sargent first introduced a full marijuana legalization bill for Wisconsin last session. Throughout the nation, marijuana legalization is gaining momentum. Twenty-three states and the District of Columbia currently have laws legalizing marijuana in some form.

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